



Workforce Board

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE EDITION

From the desk of Ellen O'Brien Saunders, Executive Director

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2005 Legislative Session Had Its High Points

The 2005 legislative session had its high points for workforce development. Significant to us was news that the Legislature had adopted House Concurrent Resolution 4404, endorsing our updated workforce development state strategic plan, *High Skills, High Wages, Washington State – 2004*. This is a first, and it is very gratifying to have their stamp of approval.

Additional funding went to skills centers, although the request for additional skill panels went unheeded despite extensive efforts by many of you to “make it happen.” The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) is to review and evaluate promising practices for dropout prevention, but proposals to expand customized training did not pass.

Below are session highlights listed by the six strategic opportunities as identified in *High Skills, High Wages*.

Increasing Postsecondary and Secondary Education and Training Capacity

The Legislature allocated to the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) almost \$33.7 million to increase budgeted enrollments by 4,185 student full-time equivalents (FTEs). There are indications that SBCTC will dedicate 10 percent of the new enrollments to high-demand FTEs. There were no high-demand FTEs specifically allocated to the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB).

There was also an allocation in the operating budget of \$1.8 million to OSPI for incentive grants to encourage school districts to increase enrollment in Washington's 10 skills centers. The monies will be distributed to school districts increasing skills centers enrollment above the levels in the 2004-2005 school year.

Reducing Dropouts and Integrating Career Guidance into School Curricula

Substitute House Bill (SHB) 1708 passed the Legislature and was signed by the Governor. It requires OSPI to review and evaluate promising programs for dropout prevention and report to the Legislature the most promising school restructuring dropout prevention programs; the most promising dropout prevention programs targeting wrap-around services to at-risk students; and policy and other changes to career and technical education and skills centers programs to further contribute to dropout prevention efforts. The bill also requires school districts to include students in grades seven and eight in their annual reporting of student enrollments and dropout data to OSPI.

The bill calling for a Comprehensive Education Finance Study Steering Committee (E2SSB 5441) contains a clause directing the Advisory Subcommittee on K-12 Education to specifically examine the issue of “helping students stay in school.”

Neither the Legislature nor the Governor supported OSPI’s budget request of \$1.5 million to expand effective career guidance and counseling using Navigation 101.

Expanding and Sustaining Skill Panels

The Workforce Board’s request for \$2 million to form new skill panels and sustain existing ones was not in any proposed budgets or the final bill passed by the Legislature.

Increasing Training for Part-time Students

The Legislature passed, and the Governor signed, SHB 1345 which establishes a pilot project for financial aid for students enrolled in four or five quarter hours or their equivalent. The HECB is to administer the pilot project and report to the Legislature by December 2006 on the results of the pilot project. A half million dollars was provided to implement the pilot project for students attending a public community or technical college.

Increase Basic Skills and English as a Second Language Instruction Integrated with Occupational Skills Training

The Legislature provided \$4 million in the operating budget for basic skills education. The funds may be used to align or integrate adult basic education and English as a second language courses with vocational training.

Expand Customized Training

The Senate proposed a \$6 million increase in the Job Skills Program allocation, but there was no money in the final budget. Bills introduced in both the House and Senate aimed at providing more funds for customized training, either through a bonding program or through a B&O tax credit, did not pass this session. However, they all survived.

A complete, detailed summary of the workforce-related bills enacted and workforce-related budget items allocated in the 2005-2007 operating budget is available at www.wtb.wa.gov/leg05.html.

Use of Governor's 10 Percent Funds Highlights May 12 Board Meeting

Use of the Governor's 10 percent funds will highlight the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board's May 12 meeting in Olympia. The venue is the State Investment Board Room, 2100 Evergreen Park Drive SW, from 8:30 AM to 3:00 PM.

In addition to a discussion and action on the use of the Governor's 10 percent funds, the Board will discuss the 2005-2006 Industry Cluster Workforce Strategy and the America's Career Resource Network plan. The Board will also conduct discussions on the proposed Perkins budget and the agency operating budget. Finally, the Board will review and take action on the Workforce Investment Act, Title I-B two-year plan.

People needing special accommodations should contact Darlene Bartlett at least seven days in advance at 360.753.5677, or dbartlett@wtb.wa.gov.

Growing Need for Applied Baccalaureate Degrees in Technical Programs

There is a growing student and employer demand for applied baccalaureate degrees in technical programs, according to a study just published by SBCTC and the Workforce Board.

Currently only 10 percent of the 7,000 students graduating with a technical associate degrees are able to transfer to a four-year institution to obtain a baccalaureate degree. The demand is there, according to the report, for this number to increase to 30 percent by 2010, if additional funding is available.

Presently much of the needed growth is coming from private higher education institutions. However, some of the opportunities available in other states could be emulated by expanding the degree-granting authority of some community or technical colleges to allow for the award of an applied baccalaureate degree in fields with existing strengths in terms of programs, faculty, and library resources.

For more details about the report, contact Madeleine Thompson at 360.753.5653, or mthompson@wtb.wa.gov. A copy of the report is available at www.wtb.wa.gov/PATH05.DOC.

Briefly

NASDCTEc Issue Brief on Shared Accountability Available

The National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education Consortium (NASDCTEc) has produced an issue brief on how shared accountability can foster improved secondary-postsecondary transitions. The paper discusses the need for common measures, their history, and the impact the proposed Integrated Performance Information measures could have. A copy of the paper is available at www.wtb.wa.gov/nas05.doc.

Nominate a Winner

The federal Employment and Training Administration is accepting applications for its 2005 Recognition of Excellence award. Established last year, the awards honor programs

that are not only replicable, but which also have achieved outstanding results. Honorees will be selected in five categories:

- Educating American's 21st Century Workforce
- Building Industry/Business-Driven Investment System
- E³ Partnerships
- Recognizing Special Populations in the Workforce
- Serving Out-of-School Youth.

Winners will be showcased at the 2005 Workforce Innovations Conference in Philadelphia July 11-13. For more details, go to <http://www.doleta.gov/roe/>. Applications close May 12.

Employment Opportunity at Port JOBS

Port Jobs is looking for an Employment Specialist who will help connect residents of a number of south and central King County cities with employment and advancement opportunities at Sea-Tac airport. Find out more by going to www.portjobs.org. The position will be open until filled, but screening starts the week of May 13.

Upcoming Meetings and Conferences

Renton Technical College is holding a free *Construction Workforce Conference* on **May 9 and 10**. May 9 is earmarked for educators, government agencies, and community-based organizations that will have an opportunity to learn more about the industry (that includes "hands-on" activities such as working with bricks and tiles), and the resources available to it. On May 10, the emphasis is on industry professionals who will have an opportunity to hear labor market economist Paul Sommers and Workforce Board Executive Director Ellen O'Brien Saunders, and be able to participate in a number of workshops. Judy Amico at 425.235.2352, ext. 2217 has more details, or email her at jamico@rtc.edu.

Tom Peters, the well-known author and business guru, is the keynote speakers at the *Snohomish Country Business Excellence Conference* being held **May 12** at the Lynnwood Convention Center. Other speakers include Governor Christine Gregoire, UW President Dr. Mark Emmert, WA BioTech/BioMed Association President Jack Ferris, Senior Technology Advisor for NASA Dr. Minoo Dastoor, and Intermec Technologies President Tom Miller. To register, contact Linda Waring at 425.921.3420, or lwaring@SNOCOWDC.org.